

## PERSHING SEEKS TO CUT SUPPLY LINE OF ENEMY

Within 18 Miles of Main Railway of Communication, Says March.

O'RYAN'S MEN FIGHT HARD

More Than 1,850,000 Troops Now Abroad, Despite Shifting Due to Influenza.

Special Despatch to The Sun.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 5.—The American army, which has pressed forward between the Argonne Forest and the Meuse River now threatens the enemy's vital line of communication between Germany and the Kaiser's armies on the entire front in France and Belgium. Pershing's troops are within eighteen miles of this central railway supply line.

This information was revealed today by Gen. March, Chief of Staff, whose interview with the newspaper men bristled with news of important developments. Besides announcing results achieved Gen. March made specific mention of the excellent work being done by Major Gen. O'Ryan's New York division, the Twenty-seventh, fighting with the British north of St. Quentin. He also singled out in response to inquiries the Seventy-seventh (metropolitan) Division and showed how these troops had a part in driving the enemy from the Vesle toward the Aisne.

As usual, Gen. March announced results only and devoted no time to speculation or possibilities. The salient features of the conference were:

Announcement that the Americans now threaten the main supply line from Germany and that the enemy has thrown fresh divisions in Pershing's path on account of this serious menace.

News that the British drive between Cambrai and St. Quentin has forced the enemy back over the Hindenburg line and enabled the British, aided by the Twenty-seventh and Thirtieth American divisions, to sweep across the enemy's zone of defense.

Announcement that Germany is reported to be evacuating the ports of Ostend and Zeebrugge where submarine bases have been long established.

Announcement that shipment of American troops overseas continued to be in excess of 250,000 a month, despite the epidemic of influenza, and that more than 1,850,000 have now been embarked from the United States.

"The news during the last week from all fronts has been excellent," said Gen. March. "Since I talked to you last Saturday the three drives begun by the Allies on Thursday, Friday and Saturday have moved our line forward on a front wider than ever affecting practically the entire line from the sea to Verdun."

"Between the Argonne forest and the Meuse River the American Army has not only held the enemy's reinforcements but

that sector but has driven its way forward on its entire front from the Kriemhilde position, where the enemy is standing. The American divisions at that point threatened the main railroad line of communications from Germany to the west front, the railroad coming through Sedan and other places of historic military interest and is the most important artery of supply of their army."

New Within 18 Miles.

"The Americans have reached a point eighteen miles in a direct line from that railroad and as soon as the direction of the drive becomes evident Germany thins in its path a great many divisions, withdrawing them from other points in the line, and they have been held there by the Americans when they are badly needed elsewhere."

"Just west of the Argonne forest Gen. Gouraud's French Army with the Second American Division (regiment and machine rifle) likewise has fought its way northward eight to ten miles to the enemy's line of defense west of Challerange. Hills have been captured which command the enemy's supply lines south of Vouziers."

"The British drive on Cambrai and St. Quentin developed into a battle for the entire Hindenburg line between those points and the enemy has now been forced back to or beyond this line along its entire length from Flanders to the Aisne. The British, aided by the Twenty-seventh (New York) and Thirtieth (North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee) divisions, directed its advance back more than seventy-five square miles of Belgium and threaten the enemy's zone of defense and have opened up his lines which he has closed with great difficulty."

"In spite of the opposition of the enemy Cambrai is being enveloped by the advance of the British, who have crossed the Escaut Canal on a wide front south of the city and have reached the hills beyond."

Importance of Flanders Gains.

"The drive in Flanders rapidly spread the line into a semicircular salient ten miles deep. By this advance the Allies have taken back more than seventy-five square miles of Belgium and threaten the enemy's possession of Ostend and Zeebrugge and of the coal fields behind Lens. In consequence the enemy is reported to be evacuating the two ports and is withdrawing from the entire sector from Lens to Arras."

The British, both towns and have advanced to within five miles of Lille.

"The enemy has come down off the Vesle-Aisne plateau northwest of Rheims and has been followed by the French to the Aisne Canal."

"In the Balkans while the Bulgarian army is retiring from Serbia the Serbian army has advanced rapidly northward and is in contact with the Austrians near Vranje, half way between Uskub and Nish. In Albania the Austrians are retiring and the Italians have reoccupied Berat, crossing the Semeri River and moving in the direction of Durazzo, the naval base which we attacked the other day."

Total Abroad Exceeds 1,850,000.

"The shipping of American troops during the last month has continued to exceed 250,000 in spite of the general epidemic of influenza all over the country in military camps as well as in civil life. In sending men abroad we are selecting men who neither have had the disease nor been exposed to it. This has made necessary some readjustment, but the flow of troops is, as I have stated, more than 250,000 for the last month."

"The entire number of troops embarked from the United States is more than 1,850,000."

In response to inquiries Gen. March

said that the Twenty-seventh (New York) division has been operating with the British in the front north of St. Quentin, and participating in the attack of September 27, made very satisfactory progress and reached all objectives.

"On September 28 and 29 it was reported to have crossed the canal tunnel, one of the chief objectives of the operations in that region, and to have captured Ezy and La Catelet. On September 30 the division was well beyond the canal."

Work of the Upton Men.

Commenting on the work of the Seventy-seventh (Metropolitan) Division Gen. March said:

"During part of June and July the division was in a sector in the Vosges. August 30 it was reported in the line on the Vesle River. From September 4 to 14 it was in the advance from the Vesle toward the Aisne, driving the enemy part way back over the intervening ridge."

The American troops in Archangel, Gen. March explained, consisted of the Twenty-seventh, part of the 310th Engineers and the necessary field hospital medical corps. They are under command of Col. George E. Stewart.

Gen. March told the members of the Senate Military Committee today, Senator Hitchcock interrogated him as to the delay of the War Department in making public the casualty lists. Gen. March conceded that the Department is behind at least 15,000 names in getting the lists out, but the delay is attributable, he said, to the failure of the lists to arrive from France.

Why Lists Are Delayed.

The American soldiers have been fighting over such a vast and varied terrain, he explained, that it is not possible to get the lists together so rapidly. Caution must be taken that the lists are entirely accurate and the work of verifying names takes time. The names of the killed and seriously wounded, he told the Senators, are published as quickly as possible.

Gen. March reminded the Senators that Great Britain, within 200 miles of the battle front, is four weeks behind in the announcement of casualty lists and that delay must be expected here.

The Chief of Staff went into the equipment of the American forces with airplanes, saying that effective quantities are now being shipped abroad. De Havilland fours are being turned out at the rate of some 200 a week, Gen. March said. Up to now 1,600 or 1,700 have been manufactured, while 1,000 have been shipped.

Eight thousand Liberty motors have been manufactured, half of which have gone to Great Britain and France, while the remainder have been sent to the American forces in France. America's position in air work, Gen. March said, is constantly advancing and constitutes no small feature of the fighting in France.

BRITAIN TRANSPORTS BULK OF OUR ARMY

Her Ships Have Carried Nearly a Million Men.

LONDON, Oct. 5.—Of more than 1,800,000 American soldiers transported to Europe to the end of September nearly 1,000,000 were carried in British or British controlled ships. American vessels carried 788,000 and the remainder

## Belgium Being Stripped of Material and Cattle

By CHARLES TOWER.

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun from the London Times Service.

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THE HAGUE, Oct. 5.—My correspondent in Limburg telegraphs:

"Trains are running at frequent intervals over the lines near the Dutch southern frontier, conveying masses of material. With glasses it is possible to distinguish horses, cattle, rolling stock, carts and carriages. I counted four trains in half an hour, each one carrying material toward Germany."

Trains of wounded pass mostly after dark, the men being in ghastly condition.

From a traveller who has just arrived in Holland, I heard the same report of the constant stream of trains of material running out of Belgium.

were brought across the Atlantic on French and Italian ships.

To insure the safety of this enormous force has entailed a tremendous amount of work for the allied fleet. The British navy has done 70 per cent. of the conveying, the American fleet 27 per cent. and the French fleet 3 per cent.

In September 31,131 American troops, 4,000 United States bluejackets and 5,000 Canadian troops were brought across the Atlantic. American vessels brought 121,947, or 39 per cent. of the total of American troops. British controlled ships were responsible for 57 per cent., or 175,721, while French vessels transported 13,951, or 4 per cent. of the total.

Of the 311,219 American troops reaching Europe in September 153,246 landed in France. The remainder came to England.

July was a big month with 317,000 arrivals, but September runs it a very close second and actually overtops it when the Canadians and the American bluejackets are taken into account. The largest single convoy reaching France from the United States last month numbered 31,108, and the largest September convoy reaching British shores numbered 28,373.

The figures help to emphasize what is being realized more fully here, and doubtless in Germany also, the enormous contribution America is making to the common cause of the Allies. They also bring out the strength of the British naval arm and the failure of the German submarines to prevent the arrival of an American army.

## AMERICANS GAIN THREE MILES MORE

Continued from First Page.

counter attack late today in the region southeast of Cune. Just south of the Bois de Foret the Americans captured six German machine gunners who were reinforcing the infantrymen.

Aviators report that the Germans are digging trenches between Cune and Brioules.

The American planes were an active factor until late to-night. Before the fog actually had lifted they were on the German lines, machine gunning the men in the trenches and harassing the transports and artillery. Time and again the roads behind the lines were choked by fliers, who with their machine guns dropped the horses dragging guns and transports.

This choking of the roads was accomplished without the loss of a single plane. Of the few enemy planes that did fly over the American lines one was brought down by an anti-tank gun capture a few hours before.

Tanks were used again by the Americans, but somewhat less extensively than on the first day. It was a day of artillery action more than anything else. Each side sent hundreds of thousands of shells, both high explosive shrapnel and gas, into the German territory.

Repeatedly the Germans gathered in force to launch counter attacks, but always with negative result. The Americans, most of whom have now had experience, here and there changing their defence to offensive and gathering in another tiny bit of ground between them and the Kriemhilde positions.

The Americans threw a flood of artillery fire into the German lines and moved infantry up with machine guns through the woods around them and up to the crest of the high hill line they slowly edged their way for hours. When the top of the hill and ridge were attained, there stretched before them the narrow valleys on whose further slopes the defences the Germans have fought so hard to retain. Miles deep in wire and a labyrinth of newly made trenches, it obviously was intended as the Germans' next stop.

There was much fighting for possession of the hill centre about a farm on the southern slope. The Americans had taken the southern part of the farm with a rush, and from there the operations that resulted in the occupation of the higher ground were directed. The Germans were forced to pay dearly for their resistance there as well as in the woods to the west and at other places along the line.

It has been learned by American Headquarters that a large part of the casualties inflicted on the first day of

the battle were due to tanks. Wounded Germans treated at the hospitals told of their terrible effectiveness. The Germans have not employed tanks in counter work, but have resorted to their usual methods of attempting to check the tanks by light artillery and anti-tank guns.

They also have been using obstacles where it has been possible to erect them. Many such obstacles were constructed of fallen trees, but only in a few cases did they greatly hinder the tanks, which either rode over them or trundled over the ground around them.

TERRIFIC FIGHTING AT ARGONNE FOREST

Graphic Account of Victorious Advance of Americans.

Special Cable Despatch to The Sun.

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WITH THE AMERICAN ARMY IN THE ARGONNE, Oct. 4 (defeated).—When the first Americans went over the top in the half darkness of early this morning under a canopy of black clouds it seemed that they would have an easy time. The roaring artillery fire which commenced at 11 o'clock last night, accompanied by many gas shells, had for a time silenced most of the German batteries, and from a commanding height near Montfaucon one could even discern our infantry walking ahead with hardly a shell burst throwing up the earth among them.

At some places they had almost reached the Kriemhilde trenches without trouble, but that was too good to last. On the left, on the eastern edge of the Forest of Argonne, where we attacked without preparatory fire, the German gunners got to work very early and sent a smashing wall of high explosives in the path of our advance. That tested the strongest nerves.

Further eastward our big guns, many on railroad mounts, had been blasting away at the crest of Romagne ridge and the batteries beyond, so that the German shells fell only by tens and threes. Experienced troops could pick the holes in

their barrage as a football halfback picks the holes in the overmaster's line. Luckily we had wrapped the west bank of the Meuse in a cloud of mustard gas that stifled and burned the German gunners and made impotent for the first few hours their efforts to fire across the river into our right flank.

Following the dancing white smoke puffs of our rolling barrage, advancing at the rate of 100 yards in four minutes, the infantry went at Romagne ridge and the Kriemhilde trenches on the wood crowned heights overlooking the country for miles. In some places they found astonishingly little wire, in others very few trenches, evidences of the haste with which the Germans repaired this position in the last week.

Attack Made "In Depth."

The method used this time was the same as that employed by the British at St. Quentin. Our infantry attacked "in depth"; as soon as the first wave stopped a second wave passed through it and renewed the attack. When very strong resistance was met the troops split up immediately into small parties and sifted through here and there.

The further the attack progressed the stronger became the German barrage; by noon it was almost as good as ours in front of Romagne. Then came counter attacks at several points in the line. For one of these our rolling barrage simply rolled backward and caught the Germans.

By 3 o'clock one unit attacking near Exermont had reached its first objective, routing the Prussian Guard, who were badly cut up; one battalion was down to fifty men. Prisoners were captured from three guard regiments. Some of these came back past Montfaucon under guard in the afternoon; they looked pretty good, but the surprising thing was that Landwehr troops, middle aged men good only for quiet sectors, have been drafted into this once crack division.

The same American unit gained important successes near the Aire, storming hills 240, 212 and 253. All told, the progress the first day was good, but shells fell only by tens and threes. Experienced troops could pick the holes in

pected, for the Germans have their backs to the wall; they are fighting hard and will keep it up to the last.

Will Overcome All Obstacles.

There was a different feeling in the air to-day about Verdun, where our men and guns are moving forward; it was the feeling of grim determination of a great many thousands of young men who have fixed their minds upon the task of overcoming all obstacles, whether of nature, such as the wooded ridges, or of man, such as the German shells and bullets.

The American army generally has been flushed with its quick success, but to-day every one knows that very stern work is accompanying and that some of them will not see the end of it.

Down the roads from the battlefield came slowly a thin line of tired, dirty men, some of them hobbling, some stumbling, all war worn. They were the slightly wounded and as they swapped cigarettes or arranged one another's bandages they talked of the violence of the enemy's shell fire after the first hours of the attack and what terrible going it was among the woods west of Romagne in the burned out stump of a village almost as well known by name as Verdun.

Two lines of men met; one of new troops, who had heard shells burst singly now and then in quiet sectors but never had known the turmoil of battle, going up to the line and the wounded going down.

"How is the show going on up there?" shouted one of the newcomers.

"They'll give you fellows hell," replied one soldier with his arm in a blood stained bandage. "But hell is heaven compared with what we gave them. Go on up and pick up the pieces."

For the most part the wounded said little, but their favorite phrase was significant; it was: "We'll get 'em yet."

11 Hits on Metz-Sablon Road.

LONDON, Oct. 5.—The Independent Air Force obtained eleven direct hits this morning on the Metz-Sablon railway, it was officially announced to-night.

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If we were ruled as the Hun rules, gasless Sundays would not have been requested—they would have been ordered, with dire penalties for disobedience.

But we are not Huns—thank God! Here in America the people govern—reason rules.

Given the facts, the American people think out their own answer.

Prodigal use of gasoline threatens a shortage. The Fuel Administration summarily could have ordered us not to use gasoline on Sunday—and made us obey.

Instead the fuel authorities asked us not to use our cars on Sunday, unless it was absolutely necessary.

Voluntarily the American people made Sunday a gasless day.

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